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(54) APPARATUS AND METHOD FOR IMPROVING ETCH RATE UNIFORMITY

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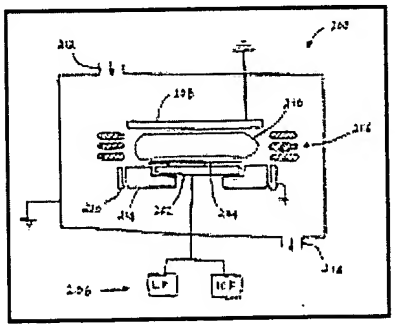

(57) An etching apparatus has a chamber enclosing a first electrode, a second electrode, confinement rings, a focus ring, and a shield. The first electrode is coupled to a source of a fixed potential. The second electrode is coupled to a dual frequency RF power source. The confinement rings are disposed between the first electrode and the second electrode. The chamber is formed of an electrically conductive material coupled to the source. The focus ring substantially encircles the second electrode and electrically insulates the second electrode. The shield substantially encircles the focus ring. The distance between an edge of the second electrode and an edge of the shield is at least less than the distance between the

edge of the second electrode and an edge of the first electrode. The shield is formed of an electrically conductive material coupled to the source of fixed potential.